

First Quarter, 2019



In San Francisco at the most recent quarterly meeting of the AASM Board of Directors, we reviewed reports from our committees and task forces, and we discussed ongoing projects of importance to the membership.

This report summarizes key decisions made at the meeting and highlights other recent AASM initiatives.

Sleep in Silicon Valley

Holding our Board meeting so close to Silicon Valley, home to both global technology companies and new start-ups, gave us multiple opportunities to discuss how technological innovation is going to impact the clinical practice of sleep medicine. Prior to the Board meeting, AASM leadership went to the San Francisco headquarters of Fitbit to meet with their CEO for a lengthy, candid discussion about sleep.

It's no secret that [Fitbit has obstructive sleep apnea \(OSA\) in its sights](#), so we had an engaging conversation about the role of technology in future paradigms of OSA identification and diagnosis. One clear message from this discussion was that Fitbit is looking to collaborate with sleep physicians and the sleep team to ensure the optimal care of their consumers.

Then, during the multi-day AASM Board meeting, we hosted representatives from both Fitbit and Verily (a sister company of Google), who gave presentations about each company's interest in sleep-related research and product development. As you might expect, our

Board had plenty of questions about the validity of current sleep-tracking data algorithms, and we expressed concerns about the way in which data from wearable devices are being communicated to consumers. I appreciated the gracious attitude of our guest speakers, who patiently listened to our endless questions and provided thoughtful responses.

As sleep clinicians, what should we make of all this? I'll share my thoughts with you in an editorial that I am preparing for submission to the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*. In the meantime, if you are interested in a useful introduction to this subject, I encourage you to read the [consumer sleep technology position statement](#) that the AASM Technology Presidential Committee published last year.

Sleep Medicine Disruptors

It's fitting that this Board meeting also involved a review of the agenda for [Sleep Medicine Disruptors](#), a new, one-day course that will be offered by the AASM on Friday, March 29, at the MATTER health incubator in downtown Chicago. The course also will be the first AASM event to be available by livestream, making it accessible to AASM members everywhere. Course Chair Seema Khosla, MD, has assembled an exciting line-up of presentations on topics such as artificial intelligence, consumer technology, big data and precision medicine. Speakers will include a research scientist from Fitbit and a health futurist/medical economist.

Don't worry that this course will only talk about the potential downsides of change; while "disruption" often has a negative connotation, it really describes a move away from the status quo, which can be positive. It's going to be a day filled with stimulating discussion about the future of our field and the potential ways in which

innovation is going to alter how we practice sleep medicine, perhaps in newer and more efficient manners. I'm looking forward to it, and I encourage you to register today.

SLEEP 2019

It's hard to believe that [SLEEP 2019](#) is already approaching. The Board received an update from the Associated Professional Sleep Societies (APSS) Program Committee, which has equal representation from the AASM and the Sleep Research Society (SRS) and is currently led by Chair Anne Germain, PhD.

The Program Committee reported that more than 1,000 research abstracts and 105 session proposals were submitted, including 81 Clinical Sleep Science and Practice proposals. Unfortunately, there is not enough time on the schedule and space in the convention center for all of these sessions to be presented, so the Program Committee has worked hard to narrow down the options, compiling a diverse and extensive [preliminary program](#) that will be attractive to sleep medicine professionals and sleep scientists at all levels of experience.

Registration for the meeting is open, so I encourage you to [register now](#) and make plans to join us from June 8 to 12 in San Antonio.

Accreditation Changes

The Accreditation Committee, led by Chair Alexandre Rocha Abreu, MD, has been scrutinizing the AASM Standards for Accreditation to identify current requirements that have a limited bearing on the quality of a sleep center. The goal is to clarify and streamline the standards so that sleep centers can focus on the issues that are of most relevance to patient care. I am pleased to report that the Board approved several recommendations that will help in this regard.

The Board also approved the committee's proposal to expand the Expedited Accreditation program, which has been extremely helpful for facilities affected by CMS local coverage determinations (LCD) policy changes. Soon the program will be available to all facilities as an add-on to regular accreditation. More details about these changes will be announced soon.

I thank you for renewing your AASM membership for 2019. Your support is vital to the advancement of the AASM vision of achieving optimal health through better sleep.

Douglas Kirsch, MD

President

Report of the Committees

Accreditation Committee

Alexandre Rocha Abreu, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Accreditation Committee identifies issues with accreditation standards and recommends courses of action to the board of directors. The committee will recommend to the board of directors accreditation status for all forms of accreditation.

Update: The Board approved several of the committee's proposed changes to the Standards for Accreditation to simplify requirements that have a limited bearing on the quality of a sleep center. The Board also approved the committee's proposal to revise the Expedited Accreditation program to make it available to all facilities (except special circumstance applications) as an add-on to regular accreditation. These changes soon will be announced to the membership.

Artificial Intelligence Subcommittee

Cathy Goldstein, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Artificial Intelligence in Sleep Medicine subcommittee is responsible for looking at advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) within the sleep medicine field. The subcommittee will provide information that is relevant to our members on how AI will affect them.

Update: The subcommittee has continued to edit and refine a draft position statement on AI in sleep medicine. The Board appointed Azizi A. Seixas, PhD, as a new member of the subcommittee.

Coding and Compliance Committee

Fariha Abbasi-Feinberg, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Coding and Compliance Committee evaluates issues related to existing codes in CPT, HCPCS Level II (DME codes), and code evaluations as

determined by the Relative Value Scale Update Committee [RUC] and makes recommendations to the board of directors.

Update: The committee evaluated all Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) Local Coverage Determination (LCD) sleep study policies due to member feedback about challenges with reimbursement for negative sleep studies, identifying several LCDs that needed additional ICD-10-CM diagnosis codes. The committee talked to a MAC representative, who indicated that CMS is planning to remove the codes from the LCDs and put them into Articles instead. Therefore, the committee determined that it would be unnecessary to request changes to the LCDs.

NEW- Diversity and Inclusion Task Force

Lourdes Del Rosso, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Diversity and Inclusion Task Force evaluates how well the AASM does in fostering a welcoming environment for all members. The task force assesses the current AASM membership to identify underrepresented groups, detect any barriers to diversity and inclusion, and recommend strategies for improvement.

Update: The task force is gathering demographic information from AASM members through new profile questions on gender, race, practice type, and special accommodations. The task force is urging all members to complete the new questions in your [member account](#). To do so, click “Edit Profile,” answer the new questions under “Diversity and Inclusion Data Collection,” and click “Update Account.”

Education Committee

Tomasz Kuzniar, MD, PhD - Chair

Mandate: The Education Committee proposes and develops educational programs, initiatives and products that meet the educational needs of the AASM membership and their patients. The committee also reviews submissions for the Young Investigator Research Awards and ASMF High School Video Contest.

Update: After identifying the need for a slide set about parasomnias and educational resources about cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I) and brief behavioral treatment for insomnia (BBT-I), the committee began developing resources to fill these gaps.

The first resource, a [BBT-I fact sheet](#), is available on the AASM website. The committee also has completed a [REM Sleep Behavior Disorder fact sheet](#), the fifth in a series of [provider fact sheets](#) to equip primary care providers and colleagues in other specialties with key information regarding some of the most common sleep disorders.

Innovative Fellowship Model Implementation Presidential Committee

David Plante, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Innovative Fellowship Model Implementation Presidential Committee will provide oversight and monitor the progress of the [ACGME Advancing Innovation in Residency Education \(AIRE\)](#) proposal.

Update: The committee finalized the part-time and blended model proposals for the AIRE initiative and sent to all sleep medicine program directors a request for applications (RFA) to participate in the pilots. Programs were selected to be included in the final applications to the ACGME for approval to begin the pilots, which are projected to start with the 2019/2020 academic year pending ACGME approval.

Lifelong Learning Development Committee

David S. Goldstein, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Lifelong Learning Development Committee develops educational resources related to lifelong learning in the field of sleep medicine, including the sleep medicine in-training examination and maintenance of certification products.

Update: The committee is in the process of finalizing two new self-assessment exams to better address the topics of Sleep-Related Breathing Disorders and Sleep-Related Movements. The committee also is reviewing and revising four existing self-assessment exams to ensure that they align with the revised [ABIM Sleep Medicine Certification Examination Blueprint](#) and the [MOC Examination Blueprint](#).

Payer Policy Review Committee

Neeraj Kaplish, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Payer Policy Review Committee develops recommendations from AASM guidelines for payers to use when establishing policies.

Update: The committee finalized additional [guideline scorecards](#) to evaluate how effective payer policies are at establishing appropriate coverage for diagnostic sleep testing services, and it is in the process of sending a letter to payers that have not yet revised their hypopnea scoring criteria to include arousals. The committee also has developed a letter to notify payers about the new [actigraphy clinical practice guideline](#), urging them to reimburse providers and facilities for this service.

NEW- Public Safety Committee

Indira Gurubhagavatula, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Public Safety Committee identifies various occupations and populations that are a safety risk due to sleep deprivation and sleep disorders, and it develops strategies to advocate for and promote improved regulatory oversight, employer awareness, and employee and public safety.

Update: The Board approved the committee's draft manuscript, "Industrial Regulation of Fatigue: Lessons Learned from Aviation," for submission to JCSM. The committee [submitted comments](#) to the FMCSA in response to a request for exemption by a commercial motor vehicle driver who has narcolepsy, and it continues to work on a position statement about sleep and physician burnout. The committee also has assembled a collaborative writing group, including representatives from the AAN, ACOEM, CHEST, and the SRS, to develop a position statement on OSA in the transportation industry.

Scoring Manual Editorial Board

Rich Berry, MD - Chair

Mandate: The mandate of the Scoring Manual Editorial Board is to review and update the *AASM Manual for the Scoring of Sleep and Associated Events* on an annual basis to ensure it is current with AASM practice parameters, clinical guidelines and policy, and addresses the evolution of technology.

Update: The editorial board continues to review the scoring manual and will submit any proposed changes to the Board of Directors in July 2019.

Sleep Medicine Fellowship Directors Council (SMFDC) Steering Committee

Ian Weir, DO - Chair

Mandate:

Facilitate information exchange/access: Develop and facilitate an annual forum for Program Directors at the SLEEP meeting. Manage existing content and develop new content as needed for AASM Choose Sleep website.

Implement strategies to strengthen the quality and increase the number of individuals entering sleep medicine fellowships: Implement strategies from the Strategic Plan/Future of Sleep Medicine plan to strengthen the pipeline.

Administration of Sleep Medicine Match: Support the Match and ensure that all programs adhere to the All-In Policy.

Develop and distribute materials that assist programs in meeting ACGME requirements: Develop evaluation tools and facilitate monthly webinars for sleep medicine fellows. Facilitate three Faculty Development Workshops each year at the SLEEP meeting.

Update: The committee has developed a [fellow boot camp](#) course to prepare incoming sleep medicine fellows with the baseline skills and knowledge needed to excel during their fellowship year. The free course will be offered at the SLEEP meeting in June. The AASM is accepting applications, which must be submitted **by March 15**. The committee also is continuing the free [sleep medicine fellows webinar series](#).

Sleep Technologist and Respiratory Therapist Education Presidential Committee

Scott Williams, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Sleep Technologist and Respiratory Therapist Education Presidential Committee recommends and develops educational content that is critical for sleep technologists and respiratory therapists working in AASM-accredited sleep facilities.

Update: The committee has planned the general sessions for the [SLEEP 2019 technologist track](#) for sleep technologists and respiratory therapists, and it is developing resources to help sleep technologists prepare for their registry exams.

Technology Presidential Committee

Seema Khosla, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Technology Committee monitors and evaluates emerging and evolving technologies that impact the practice of sleep medicine. This includes both patient-focused technologies and practice-focused technologies. This committee is responsible for developing educational resources for members that include best practices for the use of these technologies.

Update: The committee submitted the letter to the editor, "[How to Balance the Promises of New Technology with Evidence-Based Medicine and Clinical Guidelines](#)," which was published in the January issue of JCSM. It emphasizes that validation, standardized data measures, and practice guidelines are needed for clinicians to use CST in clinical practice. The committee has provided feedback on a proof-of-concept design for the section of the AASM website that will house the committee's assessments of consumer sleep technology (CST) devices and apps. The committee continues to assess additional CST devices and apps, and it is discussing the idea of potentially expanding its reviews to include new clinical devices.

Young Physicians Presidential Committee

Reena Mehra, MD - Chair

Mandate: The Young Physicians Presidential Committee supports the growth of the field of sleep medicine by providing feedback and ideas for improving sleep medicine training programs and developing resources that are attractive to young physicians in the field.

Update: The committee is monitoring the progress of the inaugural [Mentor Program](#), and the AASM began accepting applications from mentors and mentees for the second year of the program. Applications are due **by Feb. 28**. The committee also is developing an online Sleep Elective Toolkit, which will help attract young physicians and medical students to the field of sleep medicine.